

Random Encounters Gold!

By Robert Wiese



Merenea of the Golden Voice

Gifted with a singing voice second to none, Merenea was directed throughout her youth toward the study of music. She enjoyed using the patterns of music, performing compositions, and even writing new songs, but her heart was pulling her in another direction. She did not understand where her true interests were until she became angry at a mentor and killed him. This experience revealed her true wish in life: to kill. She left her community to learn more about killing, and she fell in with an assassin who was more than happy to teach her his ways in exchange for some personal consideration. Thus, she learned that she could use her beauty and seductiveness to get what she wanted.



After a few years, she left the assassin to make her way in the world alone. She began performing in taverns and other public places to establish a reputation as a famous bard, and then began looking for clients who wanted someone out of the way. She uses her bardic "cover" to both mislead people as to her real activities and to get close to potential victims. She has, over the course of two years, developed a reputation as one of the finest singers in the land, as well as one who likes to party and "meet new people." Thus, she is usually spared having to sneak into a target's abode, since her skills at defeating defenses are not that great.

Lately, she has hooked up with a human ne'er-do-well named Rassin, a jovial rogue who lives by his wits. Their relationship is somewhat complicated, though. They are not partners in crime, since their criminal interests lie in different directions. They both know that combining a theft and a murder on the same victim can be dangerous, and neither wants the other to be captured. Neither wants to be captured themselves either, if it comes to that. They are also casually intimate and share a real fondness for each other. It is hard to say whether this fondness is deep or lasting, since neither likes to become too tied to a place or a person.

Merenea: Female elf Bard 7/Assassin 3; CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 7d6 plus 3d6; hp 35; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 rapier) or +5 ranged (1d4/19-20, hand crossbow); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 rapier) or +5 ranged (1d4/19-20, hand crossbow); SA death attack, sneak attack +2d6; SQ +1 bonus on save against poison, bardic knowledge +9, bardic music (countersong, *fascinate*, inspire competence, inspire courage +1, *suggestion*) 7/day, elf traits, low-light vision, poison use, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +8; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Balance +5, Bluff +13, Climb +3, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +14, Forgery +4, Gather Information +6, Hide +13, Intimidate +7, Jump +3, Listen +10, Move Silently +15, Open Lock +9, Perform (sing) +12, Perform (string instruments) +8, Search +4, Sense Motive +12, Spot +7, Tumble +8; Deceitful, Negotiator, Persuasive, Scribe Scroll, Stealthy.

Death Attack: If Merenea makes a successful sneak attack against a target she has studied for 3 rounds, she can attempt to paralyze or kill her target (Fort DC 15 negates).

Bardic Knowledge: Merenea may make a bardic knowledge check with a bonus of +9 to see whether she knows some relevant information about local notable people, legendary items, or noteworthy places.

Bardic Music: Merenea can use her song or poetics to produce magical effects on those around her.

Countersong (Su): Merenea can counter magical effects that depend on sound by making a Perform check for each round of countersong. Any creature within 30 feet of her who is affected by a sonic or language-dependent magical attack may use her Perform check result in place of his or her saving throw if desired. Countersong lasts for 10 rounds.

Fascinate (Su): Merenea can cause up to three creatures within 90 feet that can see and hear her to become fascinated with her. Merenea's Perform check result is the DC for the opponent's Will save. Any obvious threat breaks the effect. Fascination lasts 8 rounds.

Inspire Competence (Su): An ally within 30 feet who can see and hear Merenea gets a +2 competence bonus on skill checks with a particular skill for as long as he or she can hear the music.

Inspire Courage (Su): Allies who can hear Merenea receive a +1 morale bonus to saves against *charm* and fear effects and a +1 morale bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls. The effect lasts for 5 rounds after the ally can no longer hear her.

Suggestion (Sp): Merenea can make a *suggestion* (as the spell) to a creature she has already fascinated. A Will save with a DC of 17 negates the effect.

Elf Traits: Merenea is immune to magic *sleep* spells and effects. She has a +2 racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells or effects, and a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks (already figured into the statistics given above). She is entitled to a Search check when within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door as though actively looking for it. She has Martial Weapon Proficiency (composite longbow, composite shortbow, longbow, longsword, and rapier) as bonus feats.

Poison Use: Merenea is trained in the use of poison and never risks accidentally poisoning herself when applying poison to a blade.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Merenea retains her Dexterity bonus to AC regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker.

Languages: Common, Elven, Draconic, Goblin.

Bard Spells Known (3/4/3/1; save DC 13 + spell level): 0 -- *detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic, summon instrument*; 1st -- *animate rope, charm person, cure light wounds, disguise self*; 2nd -- *cat's grace, hold person, invisibility, tongues*; 3rd -- *dispel magic, displacement*.

Assassin Spells Known (3/1; save DC 12 + spell level; 15% chance of arcane spell failure): 1st -- *feather fall, jump, true strike*; 2nd -- *spider climb, undetectable alignment*.

Possessions: +2 glamerred studded leather armor, +1 rapier, hand crossbow, 20 bolts, wand of cure light wounds (50 charges), gauntlets of ogre power (already reflected in statistics above), two doses dark reaver powder poison, one dose drow poison, one dose purple worm poison, one dose sassone leaf residue poison, one dose shadow essence poison.

* choose one to fit your campaign world

Coming in Part 2 of Gold!

Meet Rassin the thief, Merenea's "complication."

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